

In 2009, he was appointed to middle/high school principal and in 2013 became the superintendent. Dr. Newton has dedicated his career in public education to creating a positive school environment, increasing the graduation rate, and allowing students to excel.

Dr. Newton serves his community outside of his job with a membership in the Exchange Club, Kiwanis Club, and as a Board member for the Northtowns Boys and Girls Club. He is also a dedicated husband to his wife Lisa, with whom he has a beloved daughter.

Mr. Speaker, I honor the distinguished career of Dr. Newton as he retires from his position as superintendent. It is with great pride that I stand to recognize the leadership and accomplishments of Dr. James Newton and wish him the best in all his future endeavors.

HONORING WANDERERS HOME MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Wanderers Home Missionary Baptist Church, a remarkable house of worship in Mound Bayou, Mississippi.

The Wanderers Home Missionary Baptist Church has a rich history, which is a legend within itself. At the turn of the twentieth century, a group of Christian leaders and laymen, some early settlers and others who migrated to the town of Mound Bayou, were led by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to come together to organize a church in the year of 1908. Some acquired land and others share-cropped farms outside of the town limit. There was no church in the near vicinity of their homes, and means of transportation was limited. There had been a yearning for a place to fellowship and worship, and to praise and give thanks unto the Almighty God for His goodness. Coming together in the home of early settlers Mr. and Mrs. Wash and Kerri Mosley, led to fruitful discussions and plans to lay the foundation for what was to become their own place of worship, the Wanderers Home Missionary Baptist Church.

Initially, the church was located on the north side of Township Road, but later relocated to the south side of the road where they purchased land and built a church. The land was sold and later rebuilt back on the north side, its present location.

The late Reverend W.M. Wilson was named the first pastor and began with a small group of faithful members under the most humble circumstances and with lots of faith in God. As the town of Mound Bayou became a major tourist attraction, with the growing population and industrial development, the membership at Wanderers Home grew rapidly.

The pulpit has been graced with some of the most remarkable preachers and ministers. The late Reverend Thornton, Reverend H.H. Humes, Reverend W.M. Stampley, Reverend W.M. Walden, Reverend Richardson, Reverend Zack Pittman, Reverend T.F. Hammond, Reverend C.H. Moreland, (who served as pastor for twenty-six years), Reverend Andrew Hawkins and Reverend Willie J. Jackson (the current pastor), was called as the leader of the congregation in 1991.

Under the leadership of Pastor Moreland, a fellowship hall was added to the church as the need for a place to extend their fellowship beyond the sanctuary. Under the leadership of Pastor Jackson, many accomplishments have taken place: Wanderers Home became the first church in Mound Bayou to have full-time worship services; incorporated 4th Sunday Broadcast Worship Service; started weekly bible class for adults and youths; and organized and increased Youth ministry activities.

The sanctuary was renovated with stained glass windows and new pews. Due to growth in membership the church purchased a van to transport elderly and youth parishioners.

Over the years, the church has reached beyond its walls to support the community, families, other communities throughout Bolivar and surrounding counties through its Missionary Ministry, as well as its Youth and Adult ministries.

Wanderers Home supported and been actively involved as a member of the Bolivar County Baptist Association since its organization, as well as a member of the State and National Congress of Christian Education. Many of its members have and continue to serve in leadership roles as leaders, teachers, and auxiliary heads in the organization.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Wanderers Home Missionary Baptist Church for their spiritual enhancements in Mound Bayou, the surrounding communities and the State of Mississippi.

HONORING SWEET CANAAN CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a historic church, Sweet Canaan Church of God in Christ. It has shown what can be done through the years of dedication of a progressive church.

The historic Sweet Canaan Church of God in Christ is the second oldest Church of God in Christ in the World and is located at 1946 Bellbottom Road in Lexington, MS 39095.

"The first church added to the number professing sanctification was located in Carroll (Holmes) County sixteen or seventeen miles north of Lexington, Mississippi." This statement is from the book: "Fifty Years Achievement from 1906–1956 A PERIOD IN HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST." The Editorial note stated: The Historic Sweet Canaan church is located near the Carroll County line, but it is actually in northern Holmes County just south of Carroll County.

Sweet Canaan began as a little prayer mission in a wayside house of Professor Allen Taylor. Allen Taylor's property was located on Bell Bottom Road which is located about ten to fifteen miles north of Lexington. During those days Elder Morgan Williams was in charge of the small congregation. In the year 1909, the prayer mission decided to organize itself and the name Sweet Canaan was chosen. Prior to selecting the name Sweet Canaan, the church was known as the "Colored Sanctified Church." It was through continuous fervent prayer that other community people soon joined the early saints.

The present site of Sweet Canaan was once the spot where cattle of Professor Taylor grazed. Professor Taylor donated the land to the church for the sum of twenty dollars (\$20.00); a legal formality.

Although the small congregation did not have seats, the community was blessed. Mr. Isaac Randle was given a few dollars to bring some sweet gum logs to be used as seats in the prayer mission. Recognizing the small congregation's perseverance, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, Founder of the Church Of God In Christ, appointed Elder Jeffery A. Lewis as their first pastor. He was also appointed the first Overseer of the State of Mississippi. At that time, the whole state was under one jurisdiction.

Sweet Canaan is blessed to have had its first three pastors to serve as state overseers; they were Elder Jeffery Lewis, Elder Stephen Rice, and Elder James Henderson. Sweet Canaan is also blessed to have had the jurisdictional supervisor of women for northern Mississippi, Mother Sarah Ann Braggs Gaston, as a member during her youth. Bishop Timothy Titus, Prelate of Northern Mississippi Jurisdiction, preached at Historic Sweet Canaan during his early years as a young preacher. The late Bishop Louis Henry Ford, former Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ, often talked about his experience when he preached at Sweet Canaan, when he was a child and a student at Saint Academy and College in Lexington.

The first State Holy Convocation of the Church Of God In Christ was held at Historic Sweet Canaan.

Former Pastors of Sweet Canaan were: Elder J.A. Lewis, Elder Stephen Rice, Elder Fred Winans, Elder W.B. Hedges, Elder D.R. Curry, Elder James Lee, Elder James Henderson, Elder D. Pitchford, Elder J.L. Pleas, Superintendent Fred Wade, and currently Elder Dr. Percy Washington, Sr.

The first deacons of Sweet Canaan were Brother Phillip Blake, Brother Louis Brooks and Brother Charlie Randle. Mother Abbie Banks was the church mother.

Some of the early saints of Sweet Canaan were: Professor Allen Taylor, Brother Louis Brooks, Brother Willis Randle, Brother Frank Blake, Brother Jessie Banks, Brother Frank Hoover, Brother Ben Simmons, Mother Sara Booker, Mother Ina Jenkins, Mother Ida Wilson, Mother Abbie Banks, Mother Ella Taylor, Mother Emma Brooks, and Deacon Payton Smith.

The present pastor, Elder Dr. Percy Louis Washington, was appointed to serve on May 18, 2003 by Bishop T.T. Scott. Pastor Washington and his lovely wife, Glenda, have five sons and nine grandchildren.

He and the Sweet Canaan congregation have worked hard together to preserve the history of Sweet Canaan by enclosing the whole building inside the Dr. Tyree and Mary Carr Multipurpose Building. The beautiful Carr Multipurpose Building houses not only the entire historic church, but it houses the fellowship hall, residential quarters, office, and classroom space.

On July 18, 2013, Bishop Charles Edward Blake, the Pastor of West Angeles Cathedral in Los Angeles, California, and the Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ, Inc., visited Historic Sweet Canaan. They were joined at Sweet Canaan by General Board Members, Bishop Brandon Porter of Memphis,

Tennessee, and Bishop Wooten of St. Louis, Missouri. Also joining Bishop Blake were several other bishops and more than half of the Trustee Board of the Church of God in Christ.

Pastor Washington has said many times, "When I went to Sweet Canaan, on my way to the church I saw many cows. When I got to the church, I saw a honey bee hive in the back of the church. I knew I was in the right place. For I was in the Land of Milk and Honey—in the land of Canaan—Sweet Canaan."

Sweet Canaan often times invites many to praise and worship with them every Sunday. Their Prayer service begins at 9:00 a.m., Sunday school starts at 9:30 a.m., and Sunday Worship Service starts at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the historic Sweet Canaan Church of God in Christ.

HONORING JAYLIN RODGERS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Cadet COL Jaylin Rodgers of Lanier High School, recipient of the 2016 Jackson Public Schools Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps Cadet of the Year.

Cadet COL Rodgers, son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry and Tamarrus Rodgers, serves as the Battalion Commander for Lanier's 1st Battalion Mighty Bulldogs. He holds a 3.33 GPA and has earned a score of 25 on the ACT. He has taken advanced level courses throughout high school, such as Accelerated English I and II, Accelerated Geometry, and Advanced Placement U.S. History.

A member of the school's National Honor Society, Cadet COL Rodgers is also the recipient of JROTC's Scholastic Excellence Award and was a Leadership Education and Training, Level One top cadet.

Cadet COL Rodgers served on Lanier High School's Battalion staff for three years as the Human Resources Officer, Executive Officer, and now the Battalion Commander. Cadet Rodgers has attended the LeaderSTATE Leadership and STEM Camp and Boys State at Mississippi State University and the Junior Cadet Leadership Challenge at Fort Knox, Kentucky. His plans are to attend Jackson State University, major in Electrical Engineering, and attain a commission into the Army as a second lieutenant.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Cadet COL Jaylin Rodgers.

HONORING MR. JAMES MALLETT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a community servant, Mr. James Mallett. Mr. Mallett has shown what can be done through tenacity, dedication and a desire to serve his community.

James Mallett was born in the Carter community to Edward and Ethel Mallett. James' family lived on a plantation called Clark and Cato. He grew up in a small church called Mt. Salem. He learned many life lessons from working on the family farm.

James graduated from Yazoo City High School in 1983. James attended Jackson State University, but returned home to take a job with Yazoo Industries, where he remained for ten years.

In 1990 Chief BJ Wright offered James a job at the Yazoo City Fire Department. Through the years, James also had the opportunity to work under Charles Moore, Mike Woodard, Roy Wilson and Terry Harber.

James credits his wife, Alma, for supporting him as he worked for the Yazoo City Fire Department for 25 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. James Mallett for his dedication and loyalty to Yazoo City.

HONORING RICK OATES AS HE IS RECOGNIZED BY THE CITY OF TONAWANDA COMMON COUNCIL

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the career and accomplishments of a distinguished public servant, Richard Oates, as he is recognized by the City of Tonawanda Common Council. Officer Oates is a fire police officer and Associate Chaplain of the Tonawanda Fire Department, as well as the Exchange Club Fire Fighter of the Year Recipient of 2017.

Officer Oates entered the Volunteer Division of the Tonawanda Fire Department in 2007 and received his New York State Peace Officer status. He has also been an integral member of the Chaplain Corps, made up of lay chaplains who serve as both first responders and chaplains. This position shows Officer Oates' commitment to helping people of his community.

Officer Oates has been critically helpful in many emergency situations, not just as a responder but as a community asset to those affected by the emergency. There are countless stories of Officer Oates going beyond the call of duty to serve. One such story is when Officer Oates comforted the daughter of a victim receiving CPR by first responders.

An extremely devoted citizen, Officer Oates is dedicated to giving back to his community past his volunteer service. Oates leads the organization of regular Red Cross Blood Drives at the fire hall, even starting the bi-monthly free meals for donors to incentivize community members to give. Recently, he has organized two very successful blood drives in memory of Jed Woomer, a local cancer victim.

Beyond his service, Oates is a very dedicated husband, father, and son. He is married to Rhoda Oates and they have seven children together: Annabeth, Christa Mae, Rebecca, Charlotte, Jenna, Andrew, and the newest addition, Louie. He is also very committed to his faith and lives his life in a devoted manner through his work.

Mr. Speaker, I honor a hard-working, tireless public servant who has spent his life helping the people of Tonawanda. The Tonawanda community and I are thankful for Officer Oates' many years of service and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING WILLIE "SATELLITE" TOTTEN

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Willie Totten, who is a former professional football player and current college football coach. Totten played his high school football at J.Z. George High School in North Carrollton, Mississippi. Totten was a four-year starter quarterback at Mississippi Valley State University from 1981 to 1985. Totten set more than 50 Division I-AA passing records.

The Delta Devils averaged 59 points a game during the 1984 season, with Totten throwing for a record 58 touchdowns and leading the Delta Devils to the Division I-AA playoffs in 1984. Archie Cooley, who was the head coach at MVSU from 1980 to 1986, was the architect of the pass-oriented offense that utilized the skills of Totten.

Totten played professionally in the Canadian Football League (CFL) with the BC Lions (and Toronto Argonauts before moving on to the National Football League (NFL), as a replacement player for the Buffalo Bills during the strike-shortened 1987 NFL season. Totten played in the Arena Football League for the Chicago Bruisers, Pittsburgh Gladiators and the New Orleans Night.

Totten earned his master's degree at Grambling State University, and was a graduate assistant on the coaching staff for head football coach Eddie Robinson. Totten returned to his alma mater and served as quarterbacks coach and running back coach during the 1990s before moving on to coach at the high school level for two years. He returned to the MVSU coaching staff in 2000, and was elevated to head coach in 2001. Totten brought pride back to Mississippi Valley State, as he led the Delta Devils to back-to-back winning seasons in 2005 and 2006. Totten resigned after the 2009 season, and took an administrative position at MVSU in 2010. In 2013, Totten became quarterbacks coach at Albany State University in Albany, Georgia for one season before accepting the quarterback coaching position at Alabama A&M University under new head football coach James Spady.

Totten is one of a few college football coaches ever to coach in a stadium named after him. The Delta Devils football team plays in Rice-Totten Field, named for Totten and wide receiver Jerry Rice. He is a member of the College Football Hall of Fame. Totten is a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Willie "Satellite" Totten, a professor football player and educator, for his dedication to serving others and giving back to the African American community.